"Truth Is One, Men Call It By Various Names." —RIG VEDA

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Message of the East

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Life's Basic Reality

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CONTENTS

O Love That Will Not Let Me Go. Poem ..... *George Matheson*
Universal Message ..... *Various Sources*
Life's Basic Reality ..... *Swami Paramananda*
Studies in the Bhagavad Gita ..... *Sister Devamata*
Confession of Prejudice ..... *Ralph Bunche*
Work is Worship ..... *By a Disciple*
Trust. Poem ..... *Lizette Woodworth Reese*
How Old Am I? ..... *Frank D. Carr*
Home ..... *Esther Orlander*
Majesty of the Lotus. Poem ..... *Ruth St. Denis*
In the Name of My People ..... *Cont. from Spring issue*
Nipo Tahoche Num Strongheart
The Road is Long. Poem ..... *Dorothy Hughes*
Our Spiritual Responsibilities ..... *Anonymous*
From a Disciple's Notebook ..... *Cont. from Spring issue*
Thoughts and Utterances ..... *Swami Vivekananda*
When Lincoln Prayed ..... *Robert I. Gannon, S.J.*
Religion. Poem ..... *Walt Whitman*
Culture and Nature ..... *John Cowper Powys*
Report
An Heroic Spirit. Letter from Charushila Devi

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Message of the East

"And behold the glory of the God of
Israel came from the way of the East."
—*Ezekiel*
"Light shall come again from the East."

VOL. XXXIX 1950 NUMBER 2

O LOVE THAT WILT NOT LET ME GO

By George Matheson

O Love that wilt not let me go,
I rest my weary soul in thee;
I give thee back the life I owe,
That in thine ocean depths its flow
May richer, fuller be.

O Light that followest all my way,
I yield my flickering torch to thee;
My heart restores its borrowed ray,
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day
May brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain,
I cannot close my heart to thee;
I trace the rainbow through the rain,
And feel the promise is not vain
That morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head,
I dare not ask to fly from thee;
I lay in dust life's glory dead,
And from the ground there blossoms red
Life that shall endless be.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Those who seek for name and fame are under a delusion. They forget that everything is ordained by the Great Disposer of all things, that all is due to the Lord and to nobody else. The wise man says always, "It is Thou, O Lord, it is Thou!" but the ignorant and the deluded say, "It is I!— It is I!" —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

I saw a stranger yestern:
I put food in the eating place,
Drink in the drinking place,
Music in the listening place;
And in the sacred name of the Triune
He blessed myself and my house,
My cattle and my dear ones.
And the lark said in her song:
"Often, often, often
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise;
Often, often, often
Goes the Christ in the stranger's guise."
—*Old Gaelic Rune*

The ideal man is his own best friend and takes delight in privacy. —*Aristotle.*

The fact of the religious vision and its history of persistent expansion, is our one ground for optimism. Apart from it, human life is a flash of occasional enjoyments lighting up a mass of pain and misery, a bagatelle of transient experience.
—*A. N. Whitehead.*

They always talk who never think. —*Matthew Prior.*

One loving spirit sets another on fire.—*St. Augustine.*

A man who kindles the flames of intolerance in America is lighting a fire underneath his own home.
—*Harold E. Stassen*

LIFE'S BASIC REALITY

By Swami Paramananda

(An address delivered under the open sky at the Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, April 27, 1929.)

"We must not cut ourselves off from life's basic reality."

Here is a thought for the day which covers a fundamental and practical principle of existence. "We must not cut ourselves off from life's basic reality."

Just as a tree when severed from its root will last for a little while and then wither, so human beings, when they fail to keep themselves connected with their source, the source of their sustenance, gradually sink down in decay and death.

"Soul art Thou in our life;
Life art Thou in our body.
Who can know Thee, Thou subtlest of subtle
How can we ever know Thee,
Save when Thou dost come to us in Thy glory
And grant unto us our sight?"

There is a quality in our soul which reveals, and nothing but that can reveal to us the higher things of existence. It is not our intellectual struggle that brings us to this definite point of contact with our inner resources. On the contrary, it breaks that point of contact, it takes us away from it, as we often see in the case of one who, full of unrest, struggles to find a solution to the problem of the universe, some basic principle for his living. The more he struggles, however, the more confused he becomes. Simple faith often is more revealing. A humble person, simple, surrendered, through faith finds his inward support.

This may seem to us like a mystery, that someone who is not gifted, or equipped like the others who are seeking, should discover what they cannot find. It is as Kabir, the

great mystic poet of India, says: "The lock of error shuts the gate"—the gate which hides the vision, thus creating confusion and darkness—and there is only one key that can unlock it—the key of love. This is not an intellectual concept. It is the concept of being, arising from an understanding of the law, and anyone who finds his way into this finds access into Life Itself.

"We must not cut ourselves off from life's basic reality." We must find some way of union with it. Meditation, prayer, action, work—these must be co-ordinated and made one-pointed; but our work must have no ordinary ulterior motive, otherwise it will not serve us in our search for the ideal.

"We cannot describe the natural history of the soul, but we know that it is divine. I cannot tell if these wonderful qualities which we house today in this mortal frame shall ever reassemble in equal activity in a similar frame . . . but this one thing I know, that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness, nor buried in my grave."

I am reading these words of Emerson in order to give you a thought—more than a thought, a meditation. Meditation brings healing to the body and to the soul. What kind of a meditation? Not meditation on the things that we see on the mortal plane. These things that we behold with our physical eyes, no matter how much we may dwell on them, only produce a revolving consciousness of beginning and end—of the inevitable facts that man is born today, is nurtured, grows up, then gradually drifts into old age, decay and death.

The mystic souls speak from a profound depth. Take the thoughts of Emerson, which I have just shared with you: "I know that these qualities did not now begin to exist, cannot be sick with my sickness, nor buried in my grave." This is not a statement that a person might make out of intellectual

calculation. It is a feeling; it is an inner, deeper concept, and this inner and deeper concept grows within us naturally and spontaneously, as we turn more and more to meditation.

What is meditation? Meditation is not anything that can be forced upon us. We choose it. It is an inner communion that we love, that inspires us and that remains with us in all its beauty and beneficence. Occasionally we forget it because of our past habits, and there are other moments more exalted, when we turn back to it again. We have to overcome the contrary habits and we have to form the new habit. Sometimes we use our old tendencies as an excuse for our neglect, we say "I have formed the habit of scattered thinking, now it is impossible to get away from it." Suppose there is a little blemish in the mind. Keep on washing it. Meditation will clean it, purify it, and give you a working foundation.

In India the story is told of some fisher-women who were detained at night by a severe storm and were unable to reach their homes. The owner of a florist shop took pity on them, and asked them to come up and rest there. Thoroughly exhausted, they left their heavy fish baskets outside, and entering the shop, lay down upon the floor to sleep. Surrounded by the fragrant flowers, they were strangely restless and tossed to and fro. At last one of them arose, got her fish basket and, lying down again, put it under her head so that she could smell the fish odor. The others immediately did likewise, and lulled by the familiar smell of the fish, quickly composed themselves and were soon lost in slumber.

So it is with us. Meditation is like a fragrance, but we have become accustomed to the fish smell of the world and tend to go back to it.

Sometimes a thought from a book or a Bible may give us a theme for meditation. What then do we do? We read it, then we close the book in order that we may draw close to

the heart of its meaning—touch its spirit. This requires that we shut the outer gates: the eyes which are full of seeing; the ears which are so keen for the noises of the world. Those eyes we shut; those ears we close. The outer is lost; the inner becomes real, so very real that for the time being we forget that we have any outward existence, and in that silence of the soul we find our healing.

When a person is in constant pain, a physician often gives him something to relieve his suffering and put him to sleep. This helps for the time being; but it cannot begin to help the way a man can help himself when he takes his mind away from the body and bodily concerns, not through any artificial means, but by rising up in his consciousness and forgetting his mortal part. This he cannot do, however, without at the same time remembering that something within him which is abiding, ever-existent, unbounded, which does not become "sick with the sickness of the body," does not decay with flesh or die with the physical. We have to find our contact with that in a definite way, and this way, we ourselves must discover. There is no one who can force it upon us; otherwise nobody would ever become sick in this world.

I can say to you that love heals, love redeems, therefore you should dwell in love and let nothing but love rule in your heart, and you will understand me. All these things intellectually are quite easy to grasp. You have the mental concept, but its application is far more difficult. What is going to give you the power to apply in your life the truths that your mind has accepted? Do not think for a moment that the hours spent in study, meditation and prayer are the only sacred hours in life. The moments you may spend in a church or in a cloister, or in some sacred shrine, are not the only moments ordained for you as holy and marked with the seal of sanctity. You can, however, make them very rich in blessing

if the other moments throughout the day—the hours that lie before you and the hours you have left behind—are enriched by loving service, uplifted thought, and consecrated action. For only by this continuous living meditation are we prepared for that final consummation—union with the Divine.

All this brings us back to our opening thought concerning our basic reality. When a man is over active he is apt to cut himself off from reality. At such times, when he feels the energy in his muscles, and his mind is full of creative interest, he sometimes forgets the One who has given him these great assets. The stimulus that he has received mentally, the strength flowing into his body—wherefrom are they coming?

Think of a great tree. Its branches shoot up till they almost seem to touch the sky; yet if one of those top branches should say: "Here I am, high above the root and the ground is far beneath me! Why then should I look down or depend on them? I do not need their support! I am self-sufficient!" and if that branch were able to cut itself off in this way from its fundamental support, and actually stand alone, how long do you think it would be before it would die and crumble into dust?

Same way it is with our life. No one can afford to forget his spiritual foundation; therefore we must find some practical way of reminding ourselves of it. Not that we want to become sanctimonious and, giving up everything else, sit somewhere in contemplation, without any contact with human beings because we feel it might break our rhythm. I do not mean that. There is nothing that can break our rhythm once we have established it within. On the contrary, we may be able to convey it to others.

When gold is burned in the fire, it is not like the baser metals, for nothing of it is destroyed. It merely becomes more shining, while the dross is consumed. So the soul of man, as

it goes through turmoil and trial and tribulations—even sickness and death—is refined like the gold. But we do not always understand this; therefore man's attitude toward the afflictions of life varies according to the spiritual development of the individual. Thus we find one person grumbling and looking upon life as a curse because he has a little ache or pain or disappointment; whereas another person may go through tremendous suffering and come out of it triumphant. Such a man says: "Am I not blessed that this pain came and roused my spirit to greater grandeur and more constant remembrance of the Deity?" He is cleansed and polished; not just by the pain, but by his attitude toward it. Thus we see that nothing is a curse unless we make it so.

When we have the divine rhythm no outer circumstance can unsettle us. Meditation, therefore, we all need. In simple logic, we need continuative thought—thought that is vital, healing, protecting and safeguarding, and which we carry all the way through our daily living. Though our hands may be busy, our heart can feel and our mind can think and our brain can function, and when all these elements move together toward a definite spiritual end, a great power is generated. Thinking and acting in this way, a man's scattered, depleted and dissipated forces are united and focused upon an ideal. Then no longer is he a caricature of a man: he becomes a whole man, complete, all connected, with no broken wire anywhere—every part of him functioning in absolute harmony with every other part. This does not happen accidentally; it does not come to one who is idle, careless or indifferent, who, not lifting his own hand, thinks, "Oh, someone will take care of my problems; someone will pray for me and see to my spiritual welfare!" or to one who says: "I am completely comfortable and satisfied; I have nothing to ask for in my prayers!" Prayer is more than asking; but even so,

even if we think of it only as a form of petition, can we not supplicate the Supreme Power to heal the misery and the sickness which afflict the body and soul of humanity, and of the world?

There is no one, except one who is completely self-centered, and shut in by a tremendous barricade of selfishness and self-will, who can say: "I am content. I have everything I need. There is nothing for me to ask, so why should I pray?" That kind of contentment has no value, no lasting quality.

People sometimes say to me: "I have spent so much of my time already! If only I could have started on these things when I was young! Now my life is almost ended. I am too old and decrepit to do anything in a spiritual way!" There is no substance in this. There is no time limit. "It is never too late to come to the center of our being." Any moment we may have a revelation; the unfoldment may take place which will reveal to us how close we are and have ever been to the heart of Divinity. When we realize this, what need is there for us to worry? That infinite Intelligence knows how to do things for us far better than we know how to do them for ourselves.

Sometimes, through an act of impatience, or a harsh and dissonant answer we may give to another, we interfere with the divine purpose; therefore, as we turn within, we should seek to acquire a sense of balance, for only in this way shall we find a place of sanctity, a place of security, a refuge in the soul which nothing can disturb—no madness, fretfulness or discontent.

What do we gain by running hither and thither? We shall have to give up in the end, and when we do, only then will the solution of our difficulties be made plain. Sometimes people who suffer physically are restless; they toss about, fretful and full of anxious thoughts, till at last, through sheer exhaustion, they surrender, and there comes to them the bless-

ing of peace. It may seem to you that it has been forced upon them. If so, it has been forced by the Divine Hand, in order to make them realize that they are helpless without the help of that One Supreme Power. For it is not by rebellion, not through the intensity of selfwill that man can find his release from pain and know that inner quietude for which his whole being craves. Rather it is by giving up wisely and intelligently, or as it is known in the terms of religion—by self-surrender; that is, by the surrender of his little will to the will of the Divine. In the language of mysticism, it is to lose oneself altogether in the thought of the One: "I am lost, therefore I am renewed! My body was sick; now it is refreshed! A new sense is quickened within me!" We call this a miracle. He who was stooping down beneath the weight of world's misery, now is standing erect! He who looked dark and despondent, is suddenly shining with the radiance of the divine smile.

When a physician gives a dose of narcotic to put a patient to sleep, that person again will wake up and feel the pain and cry out in agony. Not so with this inner healing; it is nothing like that. Really it is to enter into another realm of consciousness; it is a quickening of the vital force, and when once this occurs, we are revived. You and I with our intellectual keeness cannot say just how it is done. The general outline may be given, and we may receive it, but it is only when the self is forgotten, when we have subdued it, have dropped it altogether, that the great "miracle" is achieved. The sense of self-importance which plays havoc with us by constantly reminding us that "this is my body; this is my home; I am so-and-so; I am rich (or poor), learned (or ignorant)!"—its control of our life is ended. And so with all these harrowing thoughts which cause us to disbelieve in our divine heritage —their spell is broken, and we are able to rise up with a new consciousness.

Now this is not confined to any dogma. You cannot say that it is Christian or Hindu or Mohammedan. It is the faith of the soul, the faith of the individual in the cosmic; and when this faith is born in blending harmony, then there comes this so-called miracle and we are redeemed.

Some of the mystics hold that the healing of the body is not as great a miracle as the healing of the soul, and in many instances this has been proved to be true. For instance, it is told that Lord Gouranga (sometimes known as the Indian St. Francis) was once passing by the great temple of Jaggernauth. Just after he had passed, a sick man, a leper—unclean and most destitute—came to that selfsame temple, drawn there by the thought that at least from a distance he could behold their great beloved teacher and perceive the radiance of his spiritual light. When he heard that Lord Gouranga Had already gone by, he cried out in agony of soul: "O Lord, why hast thou forsaken me?" Lord Gouranga by then had gone some distance, but suddenly he stopped and said: "Someone is calling me!" and immediately he started to run back toward the temple. In the meantime the leper had fallen in a swoon. When he returned to consciousness he thought he was dreaming; for surely it could only be a dream that he was lying in the Lord's arms; but when he opened his eyes, he found it was a fact and that moment he was cleansed. Then he exclaimed: "O Lord, I did not ask to be healed physically; I only wanted to see Thee. This, my ailment, has taught me the love of God; it has taught me humility. I would rather live on with these afflictions, and love God, than have a healthy body and possibly forget Him!"

You may not be able wholly to sympathize with this idea or grasp its magnitude; but what avail if the body be made fit and strong and we have sickness in our heart? This is something for us to reflect upon today. Our modern life gives us

tremendous advantages and opportunities on the outer plane; science gives us overwhelming comforts; but we must not forget that there is an eternal principle without which man cannot live happily or worthily. We must find a simple, direct way by which we can keep ourselves connected with That, for then nothing can hinder our course. Will it not make us ever stronger in our action as we grow more and more conscious of the One from Whom we have received our consciousness? I am sure that we can all understand the logic of this.

This is spiritual philosophy. All religions ask us to find a point of contact with the God-power within us. That is all that is needed. Let a man find his contact and from there let him work. His motive will be cleansed, his body will remain intact, and his mind will aid him instead of hindering him. Think of these things in the hour of prayer and worship.

Let us now come together, and as we pronounce these words, grant that they may be true.

And in order to make them true, grant that our lips and hearts may move together with all the sanctity of feeling.

When we walk in the light there is no danger from darkness.

When we walk in the light of wisdom there is no danger from ignorance and delusion.

Therefore let us always try to keep the light before us, and the avenues through which the light may shine, unobstructed, so that we may not feel any lack, any want, at any time.

Sitting here beneath this infinite sky, may we draw inspiration from the great life all about us, and as we listen to the songs of the birds, may we be reminded of the One Who gives all blessings, and is the storehouse of all strength.

Let us be still and find our peace within!

STUDIES IN THE BHAGAVAD GITA

(*Continued from the Spring Issue.*)

By Sister Devamata

When we start out on the spiritual path we must not be disappointed if at first we seem to gain small spiritual results. The initial results are always human; for in the beginning, our work lies in gradually transforming our human nature and raising it to that dividing line which separates the human plane from the divine, the *Rajasica* state from the state of *Sattwa*. Spiritual results come only after we have reached this point and are able to cross that line. The qualities enumerated in the Gita as comprising the Property Divine are all human qualities, and we should be very thankful if we can manifest them even in a small degree, since it is by this practice that we shall in time lift ourselves into the realm of higher consciousness.

One of the most essential human qualities is *modesty* or humility, because it means receptivity. We must remember that we do not create Divinity within us: It creates Itself: It manifests Itself. We merely remove the obstructions. No obstacle is greater than the obstacle of self-satisfaction or pride: the belief that we know everything already. When a man holds this belief, he makes no attempt to learn and thus shuts himself off from all possibility of higher knowledge. Also one who actually thinks that he is already possessed of the great qualities, is certainly not going to strive to acquire them, because that means hard work. Therefore we must be humble. We must realize that as we are now we are very small; we are not in the least grown-up, and we must work for what we want.

Naturally *absence of fickleness* will be essential to our effort. The reason for this is apparent. Whenever we think

a thought, a molecule rolls over the convolutions of our brain and makes a little mark. When we repeat the thought, another molecule makes a little deeper mark till, by and by, as the thought continues to come, a furrow is created and we have acquired a habit of thinking.

Now if instead of constantly thinking the same thought, we think many different kinds of thoughts, there will no longer be a single mark, there will be a little mark this way and a little mark that way, which will only serve to bring about a continually disturbed condition in the gray matter of the brain.

The divine state is a habit of thought which must be constantly repeated. Spiritual aspirants go along for a certain length of time, faithfully seeking to build up this habit; then due to a feeling of lethargy, or for one reason or another, they slacken in their effort and fall back into the old ways of thinking. At once the original furrows which are not yet wholly filled up, begin again to grow deeper, and soon the old habit is reestablished and the new habit is lost. That is why one must be absolutely steadfast.

If you have really made up your mind that you wish to attain higher vision and know your own soul-nature and God, you must, as it were, make a vow to yourself that you will let nothing turn you aside, and you must regard this as a sacred contract with the Lord and have a sense of honor about never breaking that contract. We treat God as we would never dream of treating a man; we break our word to Him daily and think nothing about it. If, however, anyone should accuse us of breaking our word to another human being, we would be indignant. If we were to take a position out in the world and were under agreement to be at the office at nine o'clock every morning, we would be always very careful to be there on time; we would feel it an obligation.

Certainly feeling a little tired or bored would not be accepted as an adequate reason for staying away from our work. Why then should we feel that it excuses us for skipping two or three days of our spiritual practice and thus losing, perhaps, the fruit of a whole week's effort, so that we shall have to begin all over again? The point I am making is that we should look upon our promise to God as far more sacred and binding than our promise to any mortal. We should never allow ourselves to break it.

Not being weary in well doing is indeed a very vital command and naturally implies the quality of *vigor*. One never sees a lover going in a lazy way to see his beloved. He puts a most tremendous amount of energy into his steps. He cannot get to her fast enough to satisfy the longing in his heart. This same attitude should characterize one who has made God his Beloved. Swami Vivekananda has said: "Put on all sails; go as fast as you can!" That should be the attitude of one who really desires to reach his goal, and until we acquire that attitude we cannot expect to make any genuine progress. If we have not advanced we know that the reason lies in the measure of the effort we have made. Our progress marks the amount of our effort and the steadfastness of our striving. We stand at the point to which we have brought ourselves. God does not pull us ahead; we pull ourselves ahead. What God does is to stand with us, and work with us, and keep us strong, that is, so long as we trust Him; but it is we who determine the pace at which we advance, and He goes with us. If we feel we are not going fast enough, then we should quicken our step, put more energy into it, make more effort. It rests wholly with us.

Many there are who in the morning feel heavy, and who rise reluctantly. Quite otherwise it should be with the man who longs for the vision Divine. When he opens his eyes

and feels that temptation to go to sleep once more, he says to himself: "It is only my body that is holding me down. My soul is just as eager to get up as my body is to lie there. Am I going to listen to my body or to my soul?" Then he arises with vigor, begins his meditation with vigor, and does everything with that same eagerness. God may feel compassionate toward the sleepy child and seek to give to him; but the sleepy one is unable to receive what is given. It is the wise man, the wide awake man, who always gains the treasure. Remember that it is the brute within us that likes to lie down and sleep. The higher consciousness keeps one steadily going forward, calm and serene, but at the same time, always energetic and full of vigor. We should watch ourselves to see that we put vigor into our spiritual living.

If we once come to realize that our life, our happiness, our efficiency—everything—depends upon our sustaining our consciousness of the Soul Principle within us, then, if we have any ambition, it will be primarily fixed upon that one ambition. One does not, however, chase a shadow very long with interest. We must believe that the soul is just as great a reality as the body, if not more so, and needs to be fostered and cared for in the same way. There must be great resolution, deeply rooted, and not just dependent on our moods. The whole purpose of the spiritual life is to overcome moods, to gain complete serenity of spirit, so if we yield to our moods we shall never gain our ends. We must keep to the even path, and just as in the pursuit of our worldly occupations we pay no attention to the weather but go right on whether it is hot or cold, rainy or clear, so also, in these things which concern our inner existence, we must go steadily onward, and in order to do this we must be absolutely resolved.

Sometimes the subjective type of consciousness tends to grow a little dreamy, and mistakes this dreaminess for medi-

tation. Meditation is more resolute and firm than any outer action could possibly be. That is why we should not allow ourselves, when meditating, to shift from one subject to another. It is a danger that people encounter when they enter the silence; whatever they meet there, they stop and converse with it, as it were. We must have a fixed object in meditation which we pursue from day to day. This keeps us from falling into this visionary state. Meditation should stimulate and refresh us; it should cause us to be more alert and awake.

There are two stages in the higher development: one is the ethical stage, and the other the spiritual stage. In the ethical stage we practise virtue on other people as we practise music on the piano. That is, we forgive this person, or we are loving to that person, or we feel patient in relation to somebody else, because we are on the plane of duality. When we come to the spiritual plane, we do not practise it on people: we cultivate it within ourselves, independent of outside circumstances. The spiritual man does not forgive anybody, for the simple reason that he does not feel that he has anything to forgive. There is nothing in him which reacts to an injury. His state of mind is such that no anger, resentment or sense of injury can rise in his mind. Christ prayed that His enemies would not have to suffer the results of their own misdeeds. He wanted to bind up their wounds. We must maintain such calmness, have such a true sense of values constantly before our mind that nothing on the outside can have any power over us. A man may kill you, but if you hold the right state of consciousness, no reaction against him will arise. In fact you become like a mother, eager to cover the mistakes of her child, and even ready to take its guilt upon herself. We should always want to cover the mistakes of others, instead of pointing them out as we are so apt to do now.

When we have any element in our mind of unforgiving-ness, anything that approximates it even, if for a moment we turn our thought toward the Christ as we picture Him through those long last hours of His life, or toward the Buddha, at once the principle of forgiveness will be established in our soul; because what we think, we become.

Always in the cultivation of these virtues remember that there is but one method: when dark or negative thoughts attack you, face right around from the world and from people and start looking toward God. Never forget that when you are walking away from the sun, you see your shadow. Face the sun and the shadow is gone. So it is with the shadows that fall over the mind and heart. Often the repetition of a holy word or text will help, but turning toward the Divine is the most essential.

Actually nine-tenths of the conditions which create resent-ment, hatred and anger in you never enter the system. If you possess sufficient *fortitude,* there are very few things insistent enough to justify your giving them access to your consciousness. Fortitude is imperative for the one who would go steadily forward on the spiritual path, and it also helps one over the rough places in everyday life. For example, the average person if he discovers a lump in his mattress after getting into bed, literally turns it into a mountain, and tosses back and forth in misery during the entire night. The man of fortitude, however, says: "What do I care if there is a lump! I will go to sleep anyway!" and with that, he puts the whole matter out of his mind and is soon deep in slumber.

Fortitude means just this. It means throwing out from your mind conditions that otherwise might overthrow you and going right on with what you are doing.

Many present-day religious teachings "treat" for every-thing that is in the least disturbing—every adverse state of

mind or body. They lay a great deal of stress upon each little contrary ripple that comes along. It is so unnecessary, for most of these are of such minor importance. We should hold up before us a picture of the cosmic universe. The universe has its moods of rain, sunshine, cold and heat, but we continue with our way of living. Our own personal existence has its little moods too, why do we let them affect us? Fortitude is like an umbrella; we just put it up and go about our business. What do we care if our mind is stormy or not? We are not going to let these passing moods alter our course or affect our conduct. We have an ideal to serve; we have a life to live and it is only incidentally connected with the changing events of this day or the next day or the day after. It is only temporarily concerned with time and space; its reality lies far beyond and within. If we keep this in remembrance, we shall not use our mental energy merely to make things comfortable for our little self. The man who keeps steadily on his course in spite of everything gains in strength daily and all obstacles go down before him: he attains.

He is like a mountain-climber. The hardships and dangers that a mountain-climber has to meet are at times terrific; but they do not stop him: he goes right on climbing. He wants to get to the top. It is a wonderful thing when this indomitable spirit awakens in a soul. It clarifies the mind of all that might cloud or darken the purpose. Therefore, the practise of *purity* inevitably follows. Purity does not mean just cleanliness, inside or outside, but one-pointedness. Purity of heart means an absolutely unified heart; it means singleness of purpose, an unmixed condition. For instance, how can we ever have true love in our heart with which to unite ourselves with God if there is any hatred there? You cannot have light and darkness in the same place. You cannot go north and south at the same time. You cannot have ice water and boil-

ing water in the same kettle at the same moment. How can you expect to have a pure heart if you have a mixed heart?

Hatred does not always mean a fully developed emotion. It means the first little ripple of resentment, the least little bit of criticism that may rise in your mind. It means antagonism, if it is only to the point of saying: "I don't like her very much." Out of that seed hatred may grow. When you wish to eliminate a weed from your garden, you don't just cut off the flower from the top; you pull it up by the roots. If, however, you cannot feel positive love, then take refuge for the time being in indifference. Do not allow any reaction at all. It does not do any good to say: "I will love all these people I formerly hated." You cannot do that, because every time you think of them the modification of hatred reawakens in your mind and heart. Rather keep your mind fixed on something you can love—a person or an ideal—for in this way you form the habit of loving. Always try to keep your mind on something that suggests love to you and try to carry that attitude with you as you start out on your work every day, and if for a moment you feel unloving toward someone, don't say: "I will not hate her; I am going to love her!" Instead swing right around and never think of her at all. Try and remember Christ or Buddha; keep a divinely illumined picture of love in your mind. When we are able to hold such a picture before us, then our foolish resentments dwindle into nothingness. It is in this way that we cultivate love.

We are told in the Bible that the pure in heart see God. The man who has gathered up all his desires into one supreme desire to know Him, is bound to know Him, and very soon. This does not mean that some day, suddenly, he is going to perceive a great Light; he is perceiving it now; he is knowing God now, every moment. It is like the sunrise—a gradual growing of light within him—the light of knowledge—the

light of divine understanding. The minute your life becomes single, at that moment God-knowledge begins. You may believe that your life now is single. You may think that you have no other desire than God-realization; but watch yourself. When somebody stands in your way or you feel that you must have this thing or that, watch and see how single your God-purpose is. If your desire were really solely set upon Deity, you would never be afraid, never be annoyed, never be troubled. In fact we can measure how far we have gone and how quickly we are growing spiritually by the number of annoyances the world is able to create in our heart.

There are those who are still such children that they only clean house when people are coming to see them, or put on their best clothes when someone is coming to visit them—they live wholly for an audience. That is a very low standard to live by. There are other people who regard cleanliness and beauty as abstract principles and they serve them as such. They may live in the desert where no one ever comes and it will not affect their standard at all. So it is with the practise of the divine qualities: it has nothing to do with people or circumstances; it has only to do with oneself in the stillness of one's own soul. It has to do with beauty for beauty's sake, purity and sweetness for the sake of themselves. That is what differentiates the moral man from the spiritual man, and until we have reached this state we are in a very primary condition. When we live our spiritual life in relation to ourselves and to God, out of the very love of it, the joy of it, then we really have taken it up never to lay it aside.

The spiritual man will not want to be where God does not wish him to be; for he knows that if he is not one with God's will he will be separated from God, and that would be the supreme misfortune. Therefore he remains perfectly calm, leaving everything to God in pleasure and in pain. He

knows that the Divine Will conquers; the Divine Will leads, and that the Divine is working within him. This state brings inevitable peace and serenity, and makes it possible not only for us to perceive God but for God to make Himself known to us within our heart and mind.

CONFESSION OF PREJUDICE

By Ralph Bunch

(Head United Nations mediator, who was sent to Palestine to arbitrate the trouble between the Arabs and the Jews.)

At one time or another, in the course of my work in Palestine, I have been accused of being pro or anti almost everything, with the possible exception of Allah, God or Jehovah. Since you are honoring me, you are, perhaps, entitled to have the record straight. And so I make a confession. I do, indeed, have a number of very strong biases.

I have a deep-seated bias against hate and intolerance. I have a bias against racial and religious bigotry. I have a bias *against* war; a bias *for* peace. I have a bias which leads me to believe that no problem of human relations is ever insoluble. I have a bias in favor of both Arabs and Jews, in the sense that I believe that both are good, honorable and essentially peace-loving peoples, and are therefore as capable of making peace as waging war. I have a strong bias in favor of the United Nations and its ability to maintain a peaceful world.

The humble man receives praise the way a clean window takes the light of the sun. The truer and more intense the light is, the less you see of the glass. —*Thomas Merton.*

We cannot read the records of the spiritually awakened without a sense of the duty that is laid on us, to develop if we can this spiritual consciousness in the generation that is to be. —*Evelyn Underhill.*

MY PRAYER

By Elva Dorr

To the Great Heart that throbs with Love for all humanity, I cry. Enfold me in Thine arms, as a mother her tired child, and teach my faltering lips to pray. Cleanse my body from every sin. Purify my heart and desires and give me strength to overcome all temptations. Enthuse me with noble impulses and give me Thy wisdom, that I may comfort every soul in this great universe. I have dwelt in darkness and my path has not been one of peace. I cry to Thee for help.

Master, Thou art incarnate Love. I have felt Thee knocking at the door of my being. I would open and let Thee in—Oh, teach Thou me! My life is incomplete. Thou are the Absolute: fill me now with Thy quickening Spirit. Thou art Eternal Life, flowing like a stream. Where Thou pauseth spring green fields and blossoms rare—so may my soul blossom into service for Thee. Thou art the essence of the rose; Thou art the bird's song; Thou art the Tree that gives shelter to mankind; Thou art the cadence of the silvery brook. Thou art the lover and the beloved, yea, Thou art the heart of a little child. Oh, give me that heart, I pray Thee. Fill me now —oh, fill me now!

Help me to be to humanity what the water is to the traveler in the desert. When night shall come and I lay this body down and rise on wings of hope and faith towards Thee, oh, Father, wilt Thou take this poor, fluttering, searching soul to Thy care; and may I hear the sweet words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

To speak kindly does not hurt the tongue.

—*French Proverb.*

WORK IS WORSHIP

By a Disciple

Not being a meditative person, when the true meaning of "work is worship" dawned in my consciousness, it not only brought me great consolation, it created in me a desire to serve in any capacity, with deeper consecration, deeper devotion, and a joy in even dusting for the Lord.

We are so apt to think and feel that any service rendered in a spiritual capacity for the altar or shrine is superior—more to be desired. That is true, but the Lord dwells in all things, and any service rendered—cleaning, washing dishes, or cooking, should be done with the idea of privilege. It will bring its blessing also.

We think nothing of beautifying and cleaning a room for a guest; just so should every room in the Lord's house be kept shining and fragrant for a constant Guest—the Lord Himself.

So often when our Guru or teacher is present it is easier to serve. Of course there is greater joy in personal service; but when he is absent, our zeal and vigilance should be greater. In that way we bring the Ideal closer. It is the Ideal we work for and give ourselves to—not a personality. It is the Ideal *in* the personality we serve; then our service is given freely and joyously. There is no sense of drudgery, no attachment.

"Ye who love and serve without thought of self are blessed!"

Just forget the idea of any thought of return or compensation from our work. Let the Lord take care of that. He does anyway. We cannot escape the Law of cause and effect.

Another thing we should learn is not to judge our fellow companions; we do not know their struggles. In my twenty odd years of association with my Guru, never did I hear him utter one word of condemnation or criticism of any in-

dividual. Each individual has to travel his own path—not yours. Follow the Golden Rule; do not expect others to do what you refuse to do.

Be kind; be patient; be loving; be thoughtful of others. That is the way to bring the Presence of the Lord near—to see Him in all things, shining in His true effulgence, in spite of outer appearances. Be true to your Ideal, then "all things work together for good."

TRUST

By Lizette Woodworth Reese

I am Thy grass, O Lord!
I grow up sweet and tall
But for a day; beneath Thy sword
To lie at evenfall.

Yet have I not enough
In that brief day of mine?
The wind, the bees, the wholesome stuff
The sun pours out, like wine?

Behold! this is my crown;
Love will not let me be;
Love holds me here; Love cuts me down;
And it is well with me.

Lord—Love, keep it but so;
Thy purpose is full plain.
I die, that after I may grow
As tall and sweet again.

When men are subdued by force, it is only for a while, for their hearts are not won; only their strength gives out. When men are subdued by moral conduct their hearts are glad within and their submission is sincere. —*Mencius.*

HOW OLD AM I?

By Frank D. Carr

I am young enough to have joys and sorrows, deep longings and high dreams, and many, many problems; and old enough to know there is a cause for every joy, a cure for every sorrow, a solution to every problem, and a fulfillment for every aspiration.

I am young enough to desire success; and old enough to know that it can never be attained at the cost of . . . character.

I am young enough to want money; and old enough to know that true wealth consists not in the abundance of things one possesses.

I am young enough to covet fame; and old enough to know that better than fame is the joy of spending oneself in self-forgetful, loving service. . . .

I am young enough to want to be beautiful; and old enough to know that true beauty is from within.

I am young enough to seek far and wide for Truth; and old enough to know that I most often find it in being faithful to the task in hand.

I am young enough to make many mistakes; and old enough to learn the lesson, forget the experience, and pass on the better things.

I am young enough to dread sorrow, pain, and misfortune; and old enough to be grateful for their chastening, mellowing influence.

I am young enough to yearn for happiness; and old enough to know that it tarries longest with us when we seek it least. . . .

I am young enough to believe in the goodness of the human heart; and old enough to keep that faith regardless of some disillusionments. . . .

I am young enough to have simple faith in God, in His goodness, in His loving care over me, in His wise and beautiful plan for my life; and old enough to value this faith as the thing that gives life purpose and makes it well worth living.

HOME

By Esther Orlander

Home: What a wave of emotion surges up in our hearts as, in nostalgic mood, we sigh forth that word. What memories, what dreams, what longing for the once so dear, the now so irretrievably departed! Irretrievably? Sound the syllable again: Home. And yet again, home,—home. Listen long! As the echoes sound and re-sound down the corridors of consciousness, is there not something in the very sound itself, which, by some ineffable magic, opens doors into room after room in a realm of reality where words are no longer merely symbols that suggest, but where they exist in that actuality of meaning which is their true being?

We are told that when the Chinese artist is beginning to learn his craft, he is put to the task of practising over and over again the simple brush strokes that constitute the symbols of his written language. So subjective are these ideographs, that this concentrated practise actually serves as an aesthetic meditation, which subtly prepares the young artist to place himself in direct rapport with natural objects, and thus to experience that realization of inner identity with them which is recognized by orientals as a primary spiritual necessity for artistic achievement.

Such direct emotional appeal is, it would seem, entirely absent from those arbitrarily devised symbols which make up our Western alphabet. Through the logical arrangements

and permutations of a comparatively small number of these literal symbols, are, to be sure, able to build up a most complex written language, capable of expressing fine nuances of thought; but no one would ever claim that the mere practise of forming these letters over and over again, however concentrated such practise might be, would ever have any significance beyond the obvious one of contributing to the perfecting of the writer's skill in forming letters.

But while this gap between the abstract symbol and the concrete reality for which it stands does unquestionably exist in our written language, can this be equally asserted about our spoken words? The former we have invented according to certain logical principles, it is the product of our Western intellect. But the latter, the words themselves, the actual sounds which symbolize for us the objects of our universe and the facts of our experience as human beings in that universe, do not these, at least a basic group of them, antedate by countless centuries all intellectual activity? Is it not as if Pristine Reality had first breathed Itself forth into phenomenal manifestation as sound? "In the beginning was the Word," says our scripture. Is it too fantastic, then, to think of sound as the bridge that links us back with the world of spirit? Is it not possible that word-sounds may veritably be magic keys with which, when we "name the Name," we may open the flood-gates of those reservoirs of ultimate spiritual meaning from which our own individual spirits originally emerged?

The poet knows that this is so. For him sound and sense are inseparable. For this reason, true poetry must be read aloud; a poem must be heard, just as music must be heard, again and again, until the wayward attention of the far-wandering, body-hampered spirit finally is caught and carried back, over the bridge of sound, from the phenomenal

world of the phenomenal symbol to the world of the symbol's spiritual reality, the world of its true existence.

Just how it happens that sound can thus bridge the gap between two worlds is a mystery no psychologist can explain, but that it does, he who has once truly listened and heard knows.

> "But here is the finger of God, a flash of the will that can!
> Existent behind all laws, that made them and, lo, they are!
> And I know not if, save in this, such gift be allowed to man,
> That out of three sounds he frame, not a fourth sound, but a star!"

To catch the vision of this "star" of meaning in a word, one must truly hear it. To hear it one must truly listen. Just as the oriental artist practises the brush strokes of his linguistic ideographs to identify himself with their essential reality, so may we achieve the same experience by sounding certain significant words in our language in a similarly meditative mood.

Is not the word "home" just such a meaning-freighted sound? Speak it again, and again, and again: home, home, home! Our spirit merges with the music of that sound and is lifted away, away, into the realm of its meaning. How far into that mysterious realm can it thus be lifted? As far as our ability to still the noises of our outer consciousness enables us to hear the overtones of that sound.

Each word-sound has many levels of meaning. "In my Father's house are many mansions," says our Lord. In which of them do you choose to linger? What is your heart's desire? Does the present precious center of your earthly happiness sufficiently expand to fill that ring of sound, home? Or do it reverberations, perhaps, take you back, in the vivid re-creation of memory, to the days of your most innocent joys and sorrows, the days of your happy childhood and carefree youth? Is that the deepest meaning of that word

for you? Listen, and be still! Listen longer! Much longer! Home, —home, —home! Do you hear at last? OM, —OM, —OM! Out of the deepest depths of your being, that sound is sighed forth, a prayer! Oh, sudden joy of recognition! Oh, happy, happy realization! Your inexplicable yearnings at last made explicit! Home! What is home but that all but utterly forgotten birthplace of your realest you! OM! The origin, the final goal, the ultimate resting-place of your weary, world-wandering spirit! Out of three sounds you have, at last, framed a "star!" Follow it, follow it forever home!

MAJESTY OF THE LOTUS

By Ruth St. Denis

I have a line, a dynasty, a plan which I must follow.
My soul beheld itself in majesty.
In Egypt . . . in India . . . in Syria . . . in China.
Always in majesty . . .
In power . . . in stillness.
This was the form, the design
That was given me at the beginning.
It is now and ever will be with me.
So, as at the beginning, I lift up my eyes to the throne.
That which was "past" is forever present,
And I lift up my spirit to behold the "future"
Which is also forever present.

The thread runs through the beads of time,
The image does not change.
It is ever white . . .
It is ever royal . . .
It is ever still . . .
It is the heart and seed-place of the Lotus.

IN THE NAME OF MY PEOPLE

By Nipo Tahoche-Num Strongheart

(*Continued from the Spring Issue.*)

Sister Daya: What was the basis for life among your people? Was it property and financial exchange, or did it have to do more with certain great moral considerations?

Strongheart: We had no material wealth, no stores and manufactories, mints and gold and all that — that didn't mean anything to us; it was all part of the earth, but we didn't commercialize it. The earth was for all and everything that came from the earth belonged to all. Every man had to be his own master, to make his own things. He didn't depend upon someone else. So not having stores, not having factories, not having machinery, the material side had very little value to the Indian. What did have value was the life that he lived, how much he was able to abide by the laws of his Creator, and the teaching that he passed on to his children.

Sister Daya: I should say that that is the real spirit of civilization.

Strongheart: The word "civilization" seems like a misnomer to me. They call us savage and they call this present way of living civilization; but if my people are savage and this is civilization, I prefer to be a savage.

Sister Daya: I think I agree with you. Indian life certainly seems to have been based on strict moral standards and to have possessed true spiritual values. You must have had ceremonials symbolic of these. The calumet, or what we call the "Peace-pipe," tell us about that and what it symbolized.

Strongheart: The pipe with us is not used for pastime or for pleasure, the way most people smoke cigarettes. With

us, it is a sacred institution. The smoking of the pipe is a means for what you might call, in present legal terms, a meeting of minds, an agreement, an understanding—you might say, an offer, an acceptance. Whenever our people made any treaty it was always concluded by the smoking of the pipe. Whenever they met a stranger and made a friend of him, they exchanged the pipe between them. And so the pipe became a sacred bond. Our people smoked the pipe and used the pipe for that purpose. The tobacco that we used was a natural herb, a plant which Mother Earth provided for us. When we placed it in the pipe and lighted it, it became fire. Fire is sacred to us. Fire, so far as we know, comes from a place unknown and goes to a place unknown. Our tobacco becomes fire and that fire with tobacco represents two elements. We draw it in from Mother Earth, and as we draw that smoke into our being, it takes unto itself all our thoughts, all our feelings, and our words. So when I draw the smoke from the bowl into myself and breathe it out again, it goes up into the spirit-world and carries the message to the Great Spirit, and that becomes the living, the everlasting evidence of what we had said, thought, felt and done. That is why the pipe is used as an instrument to complete our agreements. It becomes an everlasting agreement. God is a witness to that.

Sister Daya: But do you ever smoke the pipe just by yourself? Sometimes one reads of an Indian sitting and smoking his pipe when he is not with others. Does he smoke it for pleasure?

Strongheart: That is another type of pipe; it is not the pipe of peace. The pipe which the man smokes alone is the meditation pipe, and with that pipe, too, whatever his thoughts and prayers may be, they go up to the Great Spirit.

Sister Daya: It is a little like the idea of incense.

Strongheart: You see when the Indian smokes the pipe, he draws from the spirit-world. When he breathes in the air, the breath that goes into the pipe passes through his body and goes out again, and so there is a circle between God and himself. That is the meditation.

Sister Daya: Your Peace-pipe seems to be your great instrument of diplomacy.

Strongheart: Indian people in their diplomacy respect other people. They never delve into other people's personal lives or ask questions as to where a person comes from, who he is or what he has accomplished.

Sister Daya: If the Indians never ask any personal questions, then how do they know one another when they travel abroad and make contact with people of other tribes?

Strongheart: Very few know that with Indian people each tribe speaks a different language. There is nothing strange about it. The Nordic, the Celtic and the Germanic peoples all speak different languages, although you might say they are of one race. The Indians themselves become, as it were, an open book. The design on the costumes we wear are not for decoration. They are practically the open pages of the life of the individual. For instance, by noting the leggings of any Indian you can immediately identify his tribe or his nation. You probably saw on the leggings that I wear, five triangles. These represent five mountains. My people, the Yakimas, live in the State of Washington where we have five outstanding mountains: Mt. St. Helena, Mt. Adams, Mt. Tahoma, Mt. Baker and Mt. Olympus.

Sister Daya: Is Mt. Tahoma the same as Mt. Ranier?

Strongheart: The white people named it Ranier after a British admiral, who never even put foot on American soil. We call it Tahoma, which is the proper Indian name and means "Nourishing Breath."

With these five mountains shown upon my leggings, any Indian who sees me, knows at a glance what geographic location I am from, and what tribe is in that region. The moccasins tell my name, how I acquired it and what are my traits, my characteristics, my habits and individual peculiarities. My necklace tells my tribal clan. I wear that of a weazel. Thus a person at a glance knows whether I am of the same clan, and that is important, because, as I mentioned before, a man and woman of the same clan cannot marry.

Sister Daya: But these clans, do they go through all the Indian tribes?

Strongheart: Oh yes. Clans are named after animals: Bear Clan, Turtle Clan, Weazel Clan, and so forth. All who are members of the same clan are considered related; they are of the same group. There is a close affinity between them.

Sister Daya: You were speaking a little way back, of the name. Do you mean that an Indian child is not given a name but has to earn one?

Strongheart: That is what I meant to imply. White people name their children to suit themselves; they name their child when it is a week old, ten days old, or three days old, and the child has no choice at all, and has to go through life with some name that may not appeal to him. But the Indian child is a free agent. You might say that Indian children take their own names, for they are named according to the life they live, their development, spiritually, mentally and physically, and by their conduct. This becomes quite an incentive for a child. He thinks: "Well, I have a name to make for myself; I'll be known by my conduct, my behaviour, and if I want to be recognized as a good person, I must live accordingly. The Bible has a passage which we people accept: "By

their fruits ye shall know them." That is exactly how our people acquire names, by their own individual life and conduct.

Sister Daya: Now tell us a little about the meaning of your name—"Strongheart."

Strongheart: Well, I am a little bit sensitive about that; but I know you mean it in a good way.

Sister Daya: I mean, what does it imply?

Strongheart: Some people may not be able to understand the real meaning of Strongheart. Some people have weak hearts from a physical standpoint, and yet they may have strong hearts from the spiritual standpoint. When we say "Strongheart," it means that that person is courageous, brave, patient, tolerant, and even though he may be sensitive, he will not show his sensitivity by seeking to quarrel with someone because of some slighting reference or unkind remark. He bears his pain in silence, no matter what it is; he bears it and doesn't fight about it or argue or quarrel. He keeps it within himself—Strongheart!

Sister Daya: I know it is hard for you to speak about something that means so much to you, but it means a great deal to us too to know that.

Strongheart: No particular credit is due to me just because I happen to be called by that name; it was circumstances that brought it about, circumstances that forced me to be tolerant and patient and to endure my pains; and while it may be a credit to a person to be able to do this, a great deal is due to the parents too, and how they teach the children to be brave and courageous.

Sister Daya: You had an especially hard time with the blood of two races flowing in your veins.

Strongheart: Well, that is true. You see my father was of Scotch blood and his people, because they were of the white

race, always considered themselves somewhat superior, and I am saying this with all due respect to them and to all white people. They wanted me in many instances to disregard my Indian blood, and they always wanted to bring me up to be a white man, rather than be part of both races. I held a great deal of respect for both my father's and my mother's people; but because of my early training, which I personally revere, I cannot forget my mother. I am born from her and I have a high regard for her people. But my father's people always insisted on my trying to be more like a white man, and I didn't feel that way. They used to abuse me and speak to me in an unkind way. Rather than quarrel with them, I made the best of it, and that is why the Indian people always said of me: "He is of a strong heart. He can bear all these insults and remarks and condemnation and dictation with evenness." That is to say, he keeps his balance without losing temper or becoming impatient. So that is the way the name "Strongheart" is applied.

Sister Daya: It has always seemed to me that in this country, where people have Indian blood there is not any sense of inferiority, in fact, they are rather proud of it.

Strongheart: Well, they should be. It is the only American aristocracy that we have.

Sister Daya: With the Indians there is always that feeling of pride in their Indian blood.

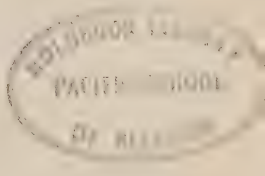
Strongheart: We are a proud people; we have reason to be proud. We feel we are true children of our Creator; we have always lived and abided by His laws and we have always been rewarded by a great abundance of food, by home and beautiful country. Everything was in our favor. We never complained when it rained or when it snowed; for it was a part of God's law—the reason for these things to be. We acknowledged them and God rewarded us. We were always a happy

people, a grateful people. Ceremonials and rituals and pageantry—everything was as a thanksgiving; and from all of this we ought to have pride, and be a proud people—children of God Who never neglected us and always gave us the very best. People from all over the world want to come to the land of our birth, and many of them say: "Oh, I am proud to be an American!" Well, who can have a better right to be an American than the first Americans?

Sister Daya: I think it would be interesting to know about the Indians' concept of democracy.

Strongheart: This question will stand investigation and research. Democracy is more than a concept with the Indians. You will find that the constitution of the United States was based on the constitution of the Iroquois League, the People of the Long House. The Fathers of this constitution, the Iroquois people, the people of the Long House, realizing the peace and the brotherhood, the harmony and the confederacy that existed among all those nations in the eastern part of this country, brought them all together—all these different tribes —to combine into one unit, as a nation, so that there wouldn't be any more war. It was this idea, inspired by the Indians and adapted by the people of the individual states, which brought about the American Union. So we might say that the present democracy was not originated by the white man, but was actually based upon the democracy of the aborigines of the country.

It was not only among the Iroquois. My own people, the Yakimas, are also known as the Fourteen Confederated Tribes of the Yakima nation, all banded together, so that there would not be any animosity or friction, no coercion on the part of one toward another. All met in council. Whatever was good for one was good for all; and if anything was detrimental to any one tribe, that was taken into consideration.



They didn't say: "Well now, because it may not please the other thirteen, we must therefore forget about the fourteenth." I have seen here how they condemn a person's home and tear it out, just because they want a highway to go through. That poor person has to suffer the consequences, whether it does him any good or not. It wasn't so with the Indians. Every individual's welfare was taken into consideration. It was thoroughly discussed in council with the person involved, and they didn't say: "You just sit back there! We are the ones that are doing this!" Oh, no! That is what I call a true democracy. Also our women were consulted in council.

There was a great abundance of food—buffalo, deer, elk, moose, caribou, and all the natural foods taken from Mother Earth; and it was for all. The thought was: "When I eat, you eat!" meaning, if there is one slice of bread between us, it is for both of us, and not: "I'll take it all, and you search for yourself." So among our people they have always taken care of the old as well as of those who were no longer able to hunt, or of anyone who had some serious injury. Of course the children were cared for. The able-bodied looked after the ones who were incapacitated or in some way unable to take care of themselves. Whatever food there was in the group, it was for all. Each one could sit down and say: "Here is a slice of meat for you and a slice of bread for you." So we all sat together and each one ate accordingly. Not that there was very much, but it was eaten so that no one took too much and thus did not leave enough for someone else. There was no money, but the wealth of earth which God gave to us was for everybody—man, bird, beast and the like.

Sister Daya: Surely there were times when some individuals would make trouble. No one is perfect, and there must have been men there who didn't always live up to the stand-

ards that were set. How did you deal with those people?

Strongheart: We have a law of banishment among our people. A man is made an outcast from his tribe. Once a man is an outcast, he loses his identity and his membership in that tribe and can never return to it again. When he is banished or discarded, no other tribe will accept him. Go out, and you will see now and then a lonely teepee out on the plains, or in other parts. When you see that lonely teepee, it means that some Indian, perhaps because of greed on his part, or a tendency to want to set himself as a dictator or ruler, has become a discard. We never tolerate anything like that.

Sister Daya: You have never been bothered by dictators then, I take it?

Strongheart: We have never had any dictation or dictatorship among our people. Our consideration was always the tribal welfare, not the exaltation of the individual.

Sister Daya: Is not this way of life more applicable to a small group of people than to a nation as big as this nation is now? Would it be possible for us here in this highly mechanized country, to live as the Indians lived who were so close to Nature and lived so simply?

Strongheart: I realize that with the great population that we have here and the constant influx of people from all over the world, that it is a more difficult problem. But Mother Earth is still providing for all of us, and whether we have many dollars or only one dollar, we all have to eat, and Mother Earth provides the same food for all. Of course in the early days, Mother Earth produced voluntarily, and there was sufficient. Today, if more people would avail themselves of the opportunity, and each give a little service to Mother Earth, as Mother Earth gives to us, there would be that much more production in the hands of that many more people.

Sister Daya: Doesn't it all lie a great deal in the training of the children and the young people?

Strongheart: Yes, that is it. Of course our young people today are brought up with the idea of entertainment, movies, dance halls, and one thing or another, so that their minds run in other tracks rather than toward a natural life. But there is no reason why it couldn't be done. We could start with smaller communities—a small community here and a small community there; and when all the little communities work that way, they would join together, and the thing would be done.

Sister Daya: One question more. You spoke of banishment; but what about the lesser offenders, what restraint did you have for those who merely showed an inclination not always to live up to their highest?

Strongheart: People like that were not usually permitted to attend tribal councils, and in that way they were put to shame. In order to be recognized as worthy to be in council, they had to change their ways.

TO BE CONTINUED

Would that I had the power to bring to your mind the vision as it unfolds before me. I see all denominational emphasis set aside. I see co-operation, not competition. . . . It would be the Church of the Living God. . . . It would pronounce ordinance, ritual, creed, all non-essential for admission into the Kingdom of God or His Church. A life, not a creed, would be the test. It would be the church of all the people, of everyone who is fighting sin and trying to establish righteousness—the church of the rich and the poor, the wise and the ignorant, the high and the low—a true democracy.

—*John D. Rockefeller, Jr.*

THE ROAD IS LONG

By Dorothy Hughes

THE ROAD IS LONG . . .
But the destination is as near as the heart is.
The hill is steep . . .
But the summit is as high as the soul is.
The way is narrow . . .
But the horizon is as broad as the mind is.
The view is barren . . .
But the land is as rich as the dream is.
You who go this way, go in love, and you shall walk in light,
And even the shadows of the valley shall be radiant as you pass.
You shall see beyond surfaces to the heart of life itself,
And know it sustains the frailest fern as well as the mightiest oak,
And nourishes the needs of each according to its demands.
The road is long . . .
But you who go this way, go in love, and you shall find no richer land
Than that beneath your feet.

I raised my eyes aloft, and I beheld
The scattered chapters of the Universe
Gathered and bound into a single book ....
By the austere and tender hand of God.

Dante Alighieri.

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me. —*Psalms*

OUR SPIRITUAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Anonymous

(The following article, though written by a member of Alcoholics Anonymous for alcoholics has a vital message for everyone who aspires toward inward perfection. Moreover, it clearly reveals the spiritual basis of this great regenerating movement whose ever-widening influence, proceeding from the lowest depths of human consciousness, bids fair to be a potent factor in bringing about a deeper faith, a wider tolerance, a more living sense of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God, in the hearts of men.)

"The thing which is happening all over the country has come about so gradually and through such material mediums as to pass unrecognized, even by us, for the miracle which it really is.

"Instead of suspending the natural laws by direct intervention, God in His wisdom has selected a group of men to be the purveyors of His goodness. In selecting them through whom He was to bring about this phenomenon, He went not to the proud, the mighty, the famous or the brilliant. He went to the humble, to the sick, to the unfortunate. He went to the drunkard, the so-called weakling of the world. Well might He have said to us: "Into your weak and feeble hands I have entrusted a power beyond estimate. To you has been given that which has been denied the most learned of your fellows. Not to the scientists or to the statesmen, not to wives or mothers, not even to My priests or ministers have I given this gift of healing other alcoholics which I entrust to you. It must be used unselfishly. It carries a grave responsibility. No day can be too long, no effort too great, no demands on your time too urgent, no task too hard, no case too pitiable. It must be used with tolerance, for I have restricted its use to no race or creed, and no denomination. Personal criticism you must expect, lack of appreciation will be common, ridicule will be your lot, your motives will be misjudged.

Success will not always attend your efforts in your work with other alcoholics. You must be prepared for adversity; for what men call adversity is the ladder you must use to ascend the rungs toward spiritual perfection; and remember, in the exercise of this power, I shall not exact of you beyond your capabilities.

"You are not selected because of exceptional talents; and be careful always, if success attends your efforts, not to ascribe to personal superiority that to which you can lay claim only by virtue of My gift.

"If I had wanted learned men to accomplish this mission, the power would have been entrusted to the physician and scientist. If I had wanted eloquent men, there would have been many anxious for the assignment, for talk is the easiest used of all the talents with which I have endowed mankind. If I had wanted scholarly men, the world is filled with better qualified than you who would be available. You have been selected because you have been the outcasts of the world, and your long experience as drunkards has made, or should make you, humbly alert to the cries of distress that come from the lonely hearts of alcoholics everywhere.

"Keep ever in mind the admission that you made on the day of your profession into A. A. (Alcoholics Anonymous): Namely, that your life and will were placed into My keeping, that relief come to you. Think not that because you have been dry one year, or two years, or ten years, that it is the result of your unaided efforts. The help that has kept you normal will keep you so just as long as you live this program which I have mapped out for you.

"Beware of the pride which comes from growth! The power of numbers and of invidious comparisons between yourselves, or of your organization with other organizations whose success depends upon member-power, money and posi-

tion. These material things are not part of your creed. The success of material organizations arises out of the strength of their individual members; success of yours, from a common helplessness. The power of material organizations comes from the pooling of joint assets; yours from union of mutual liabilities. Appeal for membership in material organizations is based upon a boastful recital of their accomplishments; yours, upon the humble admission of weakness. The motto of successful commercial enterprises is, 'He profits most who serves best'; yours, 'He serves best who seeks no profit.' The wealth of material organizations, when they take their inventory, is measured by what they have left; yours, when you take inventory, by what you have given."

"If these things have been said to us, there are those upon whom the injunction might lie heavily. They might seem austere and difficult commands, but this would only be because we have not realized, or have forgotten, the critical nature of our infirmities. Physical disease requires drastic measures for cure, in many cases, delicate operations, dangerous surgery. Our conditions when we came into this group were even more serious than that of one who goes to a hospital with a gangrenous limb. For, after all, the limit of his risk is his life, while ours is not only our life, but in addition, things more precious—sanity, honor, self-respect. We cannot expect to reach a problem so deep-seated that science deemed it insolvable, with as little effort as is required for the removal of a decayed tooth. It requires the doing of difficult things, including self-discipline and, above all, unswerving obedience to a conscience.

"It is part of God's therapy that man cooperate—a cooperation requiring high moral courage in the performance of difficult tasks."

FROM A DISCIPLE'S NOTEBOOK

(*Continued from the Spring Issue*)

The final entries in the Notebook are few and brief and were made after the Swami had moved the major part of his community to the newly established centre—the Ananda-Ashrama, at La Crescenta, California. This move, though a tremendous undertaking, fulfilled a dream in the Swami's heart—a dream for an Ashrama or spiritual retreat, modeled after the forest Ashramas of ancient India, where the Vedic truths had been realized and taught and where the spiritual life of the mighty motherland had been rooted.

The place that the Swami had in mind would have to have some such setting; it would have to be a spot of natural beauty, a little bit on the wild side, available to nearby cities, but removed from the congested city atmosphere. California, because of its climate and other advantages (which the Swami had noted on his frequent visits to the coast) seemed to offer the best opportunities.

In addition to this yearning for an Ashrama, the Swami for some time had felt an ever-growing need for expansion—a more extended view for the work, so to speak, a wider horizon. In Boston the Queensberry Street congregation had been increasing so rapidly that for some time there had been discussion concerning the vacant lot next door, and whether it would not be wise to purchase it and erect a chapel there. For some reason or other this never came to pass, possibly because the Swami's gaze was too concentrated upon the West to permit of new undertakings in the East. At any rate the Queensberry Street house was ultimately sold, after which the Centre moved from one habitation to another, till it finally established itself in its present beautiful home at 420 Beacon Street, where its back windows overlook the Charles River or, as it is sometimes known, the Boston Ganges.

Not for one moment did the Swami consider abandoning the Boston work in favor of California. To his intensely loyal spirit that would have been unthinkable; there were too many devoted friends and followers there to admit of such an idea. But for a time the greater part of his energies had to be poured into his great new venture. This venture, however, had to solidify from a nebulous vision into a concrete fact and that could not be accomplished over night. First of all, the ideal spot had to be located, and following that it had to be purchased and provision made for the reception and housing of the workers who were waiting with bag and baggage to make the three thousand mile trek to their new home.

Where, then, was the Ashrama to be—down by the sea, or inland in the mountains? An infinite number of possibilities presented themselves, all contigent upon other facts pertaining to prices, roads, etc., which could not be ascertained at such a distance. It was evident that an advance scout would have to be sent on, and the disciple, being an old Californian, was the one chosen to undertake this preliminary survey. Thus in the very early spring of 1923, she set forth with a sense of adventure, many instructions and a great feeling of responsibility.

The Swami, deeply concerned for her welfare as a daughter of the household, kept thinking of new means to ensure her comfort and security on the journey. The disciple felt completely provided for; it seemed to her that not a single detail had been overlooked, but the Swami was not satisfied. At the final moment when she was about to step out of the front door on the way to the train, he came hurrying down the stairs with a tiny box of candy-drops in his hand, which he held out almost apologetically, saying: "I thought these might be nice to have on the trip, in case your throat should feel dry."

Occasionally in life some gesture, it itself small, may convey great things to the heart, and that last little gesture of the Swami's, made from the depth of a solicitude which seemed to include all beings in its scope, has always been remembered by the disciple as symbolic of an almost pathetic care and tenderness, extended by the Swami with such selfless spirit to a blind and selfish world. Twenty-seven years have passed since then, but the little box of candy is still intact, a mute reminder of the love of that Infinite Mother who in the form of Swami Paramananda blessed so many lives.

Arrived in California, the disciple did not find her task of discovery a simple one. The Golden State was experiencing one of its periodic booms and the price of property had soared to dizzy heights. She turned for help to an old friend of her father's, a wealthy realtor with very large holdings, who put all his facilities at her disposal. But there was just not any property, within the Swami's financial reach, to be obtained. So finally, very regretfully, this friend was forced to tell her to go back to Boston and forget about an Ashrama till the conditions became more favorable.

Gloom descended upon the disciple. She felt defeated and deflated and most reluctant to pass the discouraging news on to the Swami who was waiting so eagerly for her report. What, she wondered, would be his response. His response was characteristic: he arrived in Los Angeles, and instantly the breeze of hope began to blow again.

Always it had seemed to his students that the Swami could make the most impossible things become possible; but here was a situation that might dishearten even his unconquerable spirit; and there were those stubborn facts that could not easily be put aside.

The next few days were spent in talking with this one and that one and in touring large areas of the countryside. They

were fatiguing days, and doubly so, because they led nowhere.

The climax came one night in a noisy restaurant, whither the Swami and the disciple had gone after one more, long-drawn-out fruitless search. It was late and they were hungry, and the disciple felt that a little bit of warm food was in order before she drove the Swami back to his hotel. The atmosphere of the place, however, plus the weariness and sense of frustration that hung over them both, threw them into a sort of gloomy silence, and when the waiter arrived with his tray and they saw that their dinner dishes were rubbing shoulders so to speak with soiled dishes from another table, all hope and appetite left them simultaneously, or, to put it more accurately, the disciple lost hope and the Swami lost his appetite.

That night the disciple tossed unhappily in her bed, thinking of her master's disappointment. He had been so buoyant and enthusiastic, so sure of his move, and now the way seemed completely blocked. Surely he must see that further seeking would be both foolish and futile. She wondered what he would say in the morning and whether he would look sad and unsmiling. She hoped he would not look that way; it was too alien to his nature.

But in the morning it was a fresh and smiling Swami who came down the hotel steps to join her in the car, and though he was silent as they drove away, it was a very different silence from that of the night before. Finally he remarked: "A poem came to me last night. Would you like to hear it? It isn't long; let me read it to you!" This is what he read:

> "Anything or nothing—I am content if it be Thy Will.
> When Thou dost dwell in my heart, I feel no lack of
> things of this world.
> Only one thing I ask of Thee:
> That Thou dost abide with me always and evermore."

So that was it—complete surrender of the whole problem to the Divine Mother! And the disciple had been worrying about the Swami's state of mind!

That very afternoon (or it may have been the day following), the Mother made Her Will known. The Swami and the disciple had been invited to have tea at the home of Mr. Seymour Thomas, a distinguished artist living in the valley of La Crescenta, and a great friend of the disciple's family. Over the tea cups naturally the whole problem of acquiring suitable property for an Ashrama came under discussion. Neither Mr. Thomas nor his charming wife held out any encouragement, but in the course of conversation Mr. Thomas mentioned casually that he understood that the Fusenot property of about 140 acres, a little farther up the valley, was for sale.

Two afternoons later, at sunset, the Swami stood on the terrace of this property gazing out over "the valley of life" as he called it later in one of his poems, once more silent, but silent with humility and gratitude for the great gift that he knew the Mother had placed in his hands. For from the moment of entrance into the estate, there had been no doubt in his heart that this was the place appointed, the ideal haven, the hermitage which was to be a refuge in the Western world for those who in the midst of warring sects sought the universal religion of realization.

So as the Swami looked out over the tops of the young pine trees, growing up from a lower level below him, and beyond that to the hills, and farther still to the dim distant line of the coast, his face was lighted by a smile, so childlike and blissful that the disciple forever after thought of it as the "Ashrama smile." Again and again she was to see that smile, as he wandered over the hills planning, planning, planning for the growth and development of this dream come true,

and the beauty that was to be, and though it was the same smile she had known since the first day she met him, it had acquired a new joyousness, uncalculated and infinitely moving—the most radiant smile the disciple had ever seen upon a human countenance.

The miracle of the Ashrama lay partly in the fact that this lovely acreage with trees already planted and an attractive house already built, had not followed the upward trend of the market. The price was reasonable, the terms of payment that were proposed, satisfactory.

Usually the sale of a big property stretches over some weeks; there is bargaining and bartering, blowing hot and blowing cold, and a sense of uncertainty up to the very moment the names are signed on the dotted line. Therefore the Swami's direct approach took by complete surprise the person in charge of the real estate office in Montrose with which the Fusenot property was listed. This individual, a friendly young woman by the name of Anderson, who, with her husband, conducted this realty business, happened to be alone in the office when the Swami walked in and said quite simply: "I am ready to purchase the Fusenot place. Please have the papers made out at once." When the husband returned he found his wife leaning breathless against the wall. "You won't believe it," she said, "but in the course of the last ten minutes I have sold the Fusenot property!"

Later, in talking over the entire matter, the Swami mentioned having had a dream in which he had seen the low-lying house on the Ashrama terrace, just as he had beheld it later, on that first afternoon, when he drove up the hill.

Following the purchase, the Swami returned to Boston, leaving the disciple behind in the old "La Crescenta Hotel" where she was to await word announcing the departure for California of fellow-members of the Boston Vedanta Centre.

Sister Devamata, Sister Seva and Mangala (one of the first of the Swami's California disciples, living now with her mother in San Francisco) arrived at the Ashrama in May, 1923.

For two days prior to their arrival, the disciple and some enthusiastic friends from the hotel, had rubbed and scrubbed and swept and polished in order that the new home might wear a shining countenance to greet these, it first inmates.

The months that followed were austere and physically difficult. It was an enormous place with only a handful of women to care for it. The care-taker, who with his family had stayed on after the change in ownership, proved not an asset but a liability, while a ten-year old son who speeded his bicycle round and round the main house in a sort of perpetual marathon, provided plenty of spiritual discipline for the Sisters. Occasionally the mother's voice could be heard, crying to her erring son: "Delbert, give me that ear!" and as the ear was attached to the boy the disciple, for one, wished that she would get it and never let it go. The caretaker himself, foreseeing the loss of his job, did his best to throw doubt and foreboding into the hearts of the new-comers. He dilated on the misery of poison oak which, according to him, abounded in that vicinity, and waxed really eloquent in describing the fierce winds that, he said, periodically swept the hills and ravaged the property. "Just you wait," he would warn them. "When that wind comes you will be sorry that you ever bought this place. Why, when that wind blows, the walls of this house heave like the sides of a tired elephant!"

But all this was on the side. Calm or storm, the Swami and his workers were there to stay, and the work had to be done. Fortunately strength seemed to come with the need, and just the mere fact of being able to look up to the hills, and hear the wild birds and smell the wild sage each morning on stepping out-of-doors, made up for every discomfort.

Sister Seva, indefatigable in her spirit of service, irrigated orchards and trees into the late hours of the night, dug holes in which to bury the garbage, plowed fields with a little hand plow in preparation for a melon patch and a vegetable garden, and, in addition, mothered eveything on the place. She was rewarded by long rows of shining corn and by luscious looking water melons, which later on she picked with pride, only to discover that the possums had scooped out the centre of them with their little hands, leaving nothing inside.

Mangala and the disciple, though they should have known better, stuck seeds into the hard sun-baked soil near the house, watered them daily on the run, with a little water poured from a milk bottle, and were surprised and aggrieved when not a single shoot appeared above the surface to repay their toil. Brought up amidst the profusion of California, they had taken their flowers for granted, and now felt that their own state had let them down.

All this was in the springtide of the year when high fogs roll in from the ocean and blanket the hills. A chill settled over everything, and the house, whose spacious open fire places yawned blank and empty, felt more like a tomb than a human habitation. It was not that there was no fuel for a fire, but the Swami was absent, and according to Hindu spiritual tradition, in a holy dwelling the first fire must be lighted only by the hand of the master or teacher.

However, the workers were working too hard during the day and were too tired at night to pay much heed to the cold beyond an occasional shiver. For instance, the one who conducted the public Services in the Swami's absence often had to combine the task of dish-washer, chauffeur and minister in the course of one Sunday afternoon. For people had to be motored up the hill from the boulevard, and that left only about ten minutes after their arrival for the driver of the

car to slip into an appropriate robe and step upon the platform, generally a grassy one, beneath the trees in front, or in the patio. Upon the Swami's arrival, the congregation would increase by leaps and bounds, but when he was absent often it dwindled to a faithful one or two, plus the members of the household. The disciple recalls Services of this type when the Ashrama pussy cats would walk round and round the platform chair, purring loudly, especially during the prayers, when every moment she expected one of them to jump into the speaker's lap. A verse in the Ashrama "Goblin Song," composed some years later, paints this picture:

"When the work had just been started,
Swami for the East departed
And the Sunday congregations petered out.
Oh, I well remember one day,
Just two kittens came that Sunday
And our good friend, Mrs. Topliff, loyal scout!"

All in all, the Swami's work had entered a new and splendid phase which, in the years to come, would test the sincerity, faith and fervor of every single member, and which was destined to draw from the Swami himself the very blood of his spirit, to become the seed and promise of a future harvest for his fellowmen.

TO BE CONTINUED

Is there not somewhere a place of refuge and repose? Must not such a place exist as the logical complement to life, the goal toward which all this travail must lead?

—*Benedetto Croce.*

Beauty is everywhere. A lovely landscape does not appeal only by the agreeable sensations that it inspires, but by the ideas that it awakens. The lines and the colors do not move you in themselves, but by the profound meaning that is in them. —*Auguste Rodin.*

THOUGHTS AND UTTERANCES

By Swami Vivekananda

Man is born to conquer Nature and not to follow it.

When you think you are a body, you are apart from the universe; when you think you are a soul, you are a spark from the great Eternal Fire; when you think you are the "Atman" you are all.

* * *

Strength is in goodness, in purity.

* * *

The universe is objectified God.

* * *

You cannot believe in God until you believe in yourself.

* * *

The motive is the measure of your work. What motive can be higher than that you are God and that the lowest man is also God?

* * *

To believe that mind is all, that thought is all, is only a higher materialism.

* * *

The world is the great gymasium where we come to make ourselves strong.

* * *

You cannot teach a child any more than you can grow a plant. All you can do is on the negative side—you can only help. It is a manifestation from within; it develops its own nature. You can only take away obstructions.

* * *

You have to grow from inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own soul.

The search for truth is the expression of strength—not the groping of a weak, blind man.

* * *

Truth can be stated in a thousand ways, yet each one can be true.

* * *

Everything can be sacrificed for truth, but truth cannot be sacrificed for anything.

* * *

He whose book of the heart has been opened needs no other books. Their only value is to create a desire in us. They are merely the experiences of others.

WHEN LINCOLN PRAYED

By Robert I. Gannon, S.J.

(Former President of Fordham University.)

This is a story which almost tells itself. It happened during the early hours of the Battle of Gettysburg.

In the White House Lincoln was pacing up and down, lonely and troubled, as the battle reports poured in and the fate of the United States hung in the balance.

At that time, when everybody seemed panic-stricken, Lincoln went to his room and locked the door. One can picture him there, down on his knees, his great head in his hands, praying like a child. Later, Lincoln described that moment to a friend in this fashion:

"I told God that I had done all that I could and now the result was in His hands; that if this country was to be saved, it was because He so willed it! The burden rolled off my shoulders. My anxiety was relieved and in its place came a great trustfulness."

There is an enduring Source of strength and consolation, if only we have the will and wisdom to turn toward it.

RELIGION

By Walt Whitman

I say the whole earth and all the stars in the sky are for religion's sake.
I say no man has ever yet been half devout enough,
None has ever yet adored or worshiped half enough,
None has begun to think how divine he himself is, and how certain the future is.
I say that the real and permanent grandeur of these states must be their religion,
Otherwise there is no real and permanent grandeur;
Nor character nor life worthy the name without religion,
Nor land nor man or woman without religion.

CULTURE AND NATURE

By John Cowper Powys

No refining of one's taste in matters of art or literature, no sharpening of one's powers or insight in matters of science or psychology, can ever take the place of one's sensitiveness to the life of the earth. This is the beginning and the end of a person's true education. . . .

To take nothing in nature for granted—that is the root of the matter. To awake in the morning to each new day as if one were only just born—born afresh with a mature intelligence, and as if the earth and the sea and the air and the sun were miraculous new experiences, realized for the first time at their face value—such seems to be the method of true wisdom. What culture ought to do for us is to sweep away that crust of quotidian familiarity which blinds us to the thrilling magic of life, and bathe us afresh in the luminous pools of being.

REPORT

Vedanta Centre, Boston

This year, Sister Daya's sojourn at the Boston Vedanta Centre extended over the weeks lying between Saturday, March 11th and Sunday April 23rd. They were quiet weeks but none the less full of activity relating to the conduct and social contacts of the Centre.

Easter, falling on April 9th, was, of course, the outstanding event, and no flowers could have been more beautiful and fragrant than those which graced the main altar and the subsidiary altars on that day. A high and universal note was struck by the Sister in both her Services, and the whole Centre breathed the pure, life-giving atmosphere associated with this most holy season.

On Monday, April 10th, the Centre was privileged to receive as guest a gracious and distinguished lady from India — Dr. Rani Lakshmibhai Rajwade, who had come to the United States a few weeks before, as delegate to the United Nations, in connection with the Indian Economic and Cultural Commission. Dr. Rajwade, a member of one of India's ancient royal houses, proved to be a most simple, lovely, understanding personage, vitally interested in all the creative and cultural aspects of life. However, having been a practising physician in her Motherland for many years, she had naturally gravitated toward the clinics and hospitals on her way from coast to coast. She was, therefore, more eager while in Boston to devote herself to the great centres of art and learning for which that city, with its environs, is famous. Her stay, unfortunately, was limited to two days, so a great deal had to be concentrated in a brief period. Through the cooperation of the Centre's devoted friend Mrs. Eunice Langenbach, who loaned herself and her car for the purpose,

this was accomplished. Harvard University and Wellesley College showed every courtesy to the doctor and her party. The famous glass flowers at the University Museum fascinated her, as did the rich mineral exhibit. She stood in wonder before Harvard's calculating machine (which in four or five minutes can do a problem in mathematics which would take a man a lifetime to solve), and in deep reverence, within the study of Ralph Waldo Emerson's home in Concord. The Indian display at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts held special interest for her, and she was enthusiastic over the beauty of the Gardiner Museum, whose rich Italian court was massed with Easter flowers. On Tuesday night, following the Class, a reception was tendered her at the Centre, at which she spoke a few words of greeting to those assembled. The following morning she flew to New York on her way home to India by the way of England.

On Sunday, April 23rd, Sister Daya took train for the west, and after stopping two days in New York City, arrived at the Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta on Saturday, April 29th.

Lord Buddhas's Birthday was observed on Friday, May the 26th. It was in the order of a spring festival and reminiscent of many happy celebrations of the past. The theme for the Special Service was, "Practise of Non-Injury in a Warring World" enlarging which Srimati Gayatri Devi frequently spoke of Mahatma Gandhi as the unique exemplifier of Buddha's teaching *Ahimsa* or non-injury.

On May the 26th Gayatri Devi spoke at the Arlington Street Unitarian Church Chapel. She was the guest of Cosmo Theist Society, sharing the platform with Rev. Kenneth Patton, Minister of the Charles Street Universalist Church. The approach of the two speakers to the theme of "Our Contributions to a World Religion was entirely different, both arousing eager interest among the audience.

On the following week, Wednesday the 31st, the Altar Guild of the Episcopal Church of Concord, Massachusetts, gave Gayatri Devi a most hearty welcome. The meeting was held at the beautiful home of Mr. & Mrs. R. M. Cameron, situated on the Concord River and surrounded by green slopes, gardens and woodland. On this bright and sunny afternoon Gayatri Devi was led to a lawn completely encircled by multicolored blooming lilacs where a group of eager ladies awaited her informal talk on "Prayer." Afterwards a hearty fellowship enhanced the contentment of the assembled women, some of whom had for the first time heard of the religious ways of India. It was a great delight as well as surprise to Gayatri Devi to receive hospitality at an American home which held a small chapel for the family's daily worship.

Ananda Ashrama, Cohasset, Mass.

Once again the Sanctuary in the woods of Boston's South Shore welcomed the peace lovers to its serene environment. On Memorial Day, May the 31st, a group of thirty-five gathered together at the Ashrama participating in the midday silence, Hindu dinner and the out-of-door service. This marked the beginning of the season's program which includes daily services for the resident community and guests.

At the moment the Ashrama guest house is under construction. It is being enlarged through necessity and will be ready for those desiring to spend their vacations by the end of the month.

ANANDA ASHRAMA, LA CRESCENTA, CALIFORNIA

This year Srimati Gayatri Devi's visit to Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, California, covered a period of seven weeks beginning from March 4th until April 24th. It was eventful only in the sense that the Services and Classes aroused

increasing interest among the Ashrama's large number of followers as well as the many new friends who came faithfully to the Temple for inspiration and stimulus. Southern California was at its best in warmth and wealth of sunshine which came as a welcome boon to a regular dweller of cold Boston.

Easter was as usual the most outstanding observance of the year, attracting to the Ashrama hilltop large attendances for the three Sunday Services. However, California's "perfect weather" became slightly "unusual" on this particular occasion as steady rain starting on the night of Good Friday kept up an intermittent rhythm through Saturday until the early morning of Easter Sunday. It was not a small disappointment to have to abandon all preparations for the Sunrise Service to be held in the open air. But compensation was found in the enthusiastic response of eighty or more persons who did not hesitate to drive through rain from long distances in order to join in worship at that early dawn. Music was specially inspiring with Sister Vimala at the organ accompanying Mrs. Faith Warriner, Mrs. Bernadette Rowell and Carl Damkilde, each offering exultant devotion through vocal solos. As the congregation left the Temple through its broad entrance, the sun came out from behind the clouds and shone upon the snow of the high peaks of the Mother Mountains sheltering the Ashrama. The day reached its climactic point at the eleven o'clock Service when Gayatri Devi spoke on "Who Is Immortal" before an attendance overflowing the Temple.

On the following Sunday the afternoon Service included a special observance. A lifesize portrait of Swami Paramananda, the work of Mr. Harold Miles, a distinguished artist, was waiting to be presented to the Ashrama. Upon Charu Prava Guhathakuta, Gayatri Devi's mother, fell the honor of the unveiling because of her distinction as the Swami's boyhood companion and friend. This lady of marked

composure, who had won all hearts by her dignity and universal mother love, quickly stepped up to the Altar platform to reveal the tall standing form of the Ashrama's founder, robed in white and with that benign smile by which his friends and admirers knew him. The picture now hangs in the Library, greeting all who cross the threshold of the Ashrama. During the service Mr. Miles was called upon to address the audience who listened with eager interest to the artist's twenty-five years of association with the place and how he had come to paint the portrait as an act of appreciation for the help and inspiration he had received.

On Sunday, May 28th, the Ashrama celebrated its 27th birthday anniversary. Very early in the morning the sun broke through an enveloping bank of fog, thus insuring a perfect day for the many friends who came up the hill to offer their gifts of love and feeling to this fair Retreat, enthroned like a queen amid vernal bloom. The shrine and altar in the Temple of the Universal Spirit were rarely beautiful, with a profusion of flowers, spreading their bloom like great wings, while red and white vigils flickered along the edge of the altar and the altar step with jewel-like lustre. Sister Daya's theme at the morning Service was "Our Living Ideal." In the afternoon she spoke on the "Ashrama Eternal." Toward the close of the morning Service, she called upon those present, if they felt so inclined, to express their birthday wishes for the Ashrama. The response was warm and deeply moving, as one by one, each rose and gave voice to the genuine gratitude she felt for what had been to her a true spiritual refuge and home, and which must always be associated with the shining spirit of its ever blessed founder, Swami Paramananda. The music of the organ, along with the voices of Mrs. Faith Warriner and Mr. Carl Damkilde was in itself a prayer.

Sister Daya announced that on Tuesday, Memorial Day, the Temple would be open for meditation between the hours of 2 and 5 P.M.; while on Thursday night, June 1st, a special Service would be held in honor of Lord Buddha's birthday.

AN HEROIC SPIRIT

"Message" readers will recall the name of Charushila Devi, the courageous soul, who on her return to India after a sojourn both at the Ananda Ashrama, La Crescenta, and the Vedanta Centre of Boston, started in the name of Swami Paramananda — her spiritual guide and childhood friend — a school and home for girls — a place where young widows could be trained to support themselves and where all could have the advantage of secular and spiritual education and training. This home, the Ananda Ashrama of Dacca, was inaugurated by Charushila Devi single-handed and without any material backing or assets whatsoever. For this tiny little woman it was a herculean task, but she had the faith that makes the most impossible things possible. Through her consecrated efforts and her fervor gradually help came to her—not a great deal, but enough for the moment. The school grew and grew, equipment came for handicrafts, teachers came and many students. Finally, after some years, she was able to move to an adequate dwelling, set in the midst of a spacious and lovely garden, and her school became an example for educators in the state of Bengal.

When the dreadful famine struck India, she gave daily out of her meagre government ration to the starving at the gate, each girl sharing with these pathetic people the food on her own plate. When the rioting broke loose, she offered shelter to not a few who, escaping with their lives from burning

homes, found themselves without a place to lay their heads.

But this Indian Ananda Ashrama fell within the territory of the new country, Pakistan, and since Charushila Devi's work was purely Hindu, her position was precarious to say the least. Immediately after the division between the two countries occurred, she was called upon by the Pakistan government to vacate immediately and move to India. This she refused to do. She told them that it was an impossibility to get out on a twenty-four hour notice and transport fifty or more girls, the large looms and other expensive equipment such a distance when she did not have the money for such a proceeding and had no place to go. The following day the order was rescinded and Charushila Devi stayed on; isolated and insecure.

Then some weeks ago the following letter was received from her. It tells its own story:

"There has been terrible carnage all throughout East Bengal, as the result of which a few thousands of Hindus right around Dacca have been wiped out. To have a proper estimate of the killings, looting and arson is impossible. In Dacca it began on the 10th of February last, when the Hindus did not have the slightest apprehension that such a thing could happen. In the area where we lived, it started at about half past two or quarter to three in the daytime. We were fearfully shocked to find people breaking into houses, doing inhuman acts. Within a few minutes our house was attacked, heavy axes were falling on the massive doors, and other weapons began breaking mortars and bricks on both sides. But two plus two, four strokes, and a voice was heard, deep and commanding, "Leave that, otherwise you die!" At once the mob dispersed like magic; but it was terribly sad and heart-breaking that the fury fell on the next door.

"So, to make a long story short, we have closed the Ash-

rama there and have come away to Calcutta with only our clothes and bedding. The Ashrama building with all its furniture, cows and servants are still there and will be so until we are able to dispose of them, and that also has to be done without delay; otherwise we lose them.

"Our leaving Dacca was also God-send. Steamer or train-journey being perilous, I felt the girls must be rescued by plane. But how? Who were to bear that expense? Through His grace all was done; we all had a free flight; not only that, a free transport in every way. This Government (Government of India) has arranged for us (fifty) a temporary shelter in this women's institution where our food and lodging are being taken care of.

"So I feel, and everyone of us the same way, that though the experience was a horrid and terrifying one, it was the greatest blessing in disguise, making His guidance, His protection a vivid one, a living reality. *Jai Guru! Jai Thakur! Jai Ma!*"

Since the receipt of this letter we have had no further news, but we know that though Charushila Devi seemed divinely protected and provided for, still her problem is tremendous and imperative. She needs help, perhaps as never before. The school must be maintained for the sake of the many who are finding it the gateway to a new life. The "Message" seldom asks financial aid for any cause, but in this case it feels that an appeal should be made for this staunch, dedicated spirit, who is giving her all for others with true love and understanding.

Any contribution, however small, will be, oh, so gratefully received and may be sent either to the Vedanta Centre, 420 Beacon Street, Boston 15, Massachusetts, or to the Ananda Ashrama, P. O. Box 577, La Crescenta, California.